

Dear CGA Environment Committee Chairman and Members,

The Connecticut Federation of Dog Cubs and Responsible Dog Owners, Inc. (the “CFD”) is made up of over forty (40) dog clubs representing pure breed dogs that participate in conformation, obedience, agility, and hunting/tracking. CFD’s mission is to promote responsible dog ownership and the general welfare of dogs and their owners. **CFD opposes HB 5077.**

Most Connecticut research institutions administer their own internal adoption programs, run by the staff members within the universities. Therefore, **HB 5077 attempts to fix a problem that does not exist.** For animals deemed adoptable, it will not reduce euthanasia or increase the numbers of animals being adopted from research at all, and in fact may *decrease* the number of animals by preventing the people who know the animals best, and who are already caring for these animals, from continuing to be directly involved in eventual placement into their permanent homes.

Precisely because researchers and staff know their animals best, and because they care most about them as individuals, they are personally committed to finding them the best possible homes. That is why they operate the internal adoption programs they do. In fact, research facilities have higher adoption rates than most private or government shelters. Generally speaking it is 100% of adoptable animals.

It is true that some animals are not *eligible* for adoption because they are owned by the researchers, are involved in ongoing research, are in breeding programs necessary for research, the particular research study requires ongoing tissue sampling or sampling that requires euthanasia; or because an animal’s health or temperament would not permit adoption. These situations, however, are in the minority.

Finally, research animals and their care is already thoroughly overseen, before, during and after a research study by each institution’s USDA mandated Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (the “IACUC”). The IACUC is a requirement of every institution and it operates to oversee all animal studies from beginning to end. It is the IACUC, not the researcher that decides the disposition of research animals.

HB 5077 would lead research facilities to have to close these internal programs, and be forced to turn over their animals to weakly regulated, private non-profit groups - with unknown adoption rates, unknown operational processes, and run by people with no connection to the animals. Further, since many of these groups oppose research on animals in the first place, such transfers will inevitably lead to further negative propaganda directed at the institutions. This may have an unfortunate chilling effect on the conduct of research itself, a result undesirable for Connecticut’s reputation as a research center of excellence.

There can be no additional benefit to research animals by forcing universities to subject their scientists and their animals to direct interaction with organizations ideologically opposed to the very work they do, and who will undoubtedly use such interactions to attempt to undermine the research itself. Implementing such a law will therefore negatively impact the process of medical research and discovery in Connecticut, significantly increase regulatory and compliance costs at research universities, all while failing to increase the adoption rate of *any animal and possibly decrease their welfare.* **CFD opposes such an outcome.**

The second portion of this bill's language seems to be misplaced in HB 5077. It addresses very specific concerns about tethering and sheltering of pets rather than of research dogs, and should not be included. These latter concerns are not relevant to research dogs as no credible allegations about improper tethering or sheltering of research dogs have been made or substantiated. Including this language in this bill only serves to cloud, rather than enhance meaningful dialog about the disposition of research dogs.

CFD believes a vote for this bill is a vote against the welfare of research animals. We urge you to oppose HB 5707.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Laurie Maulucci, CFD President and
Mabel M. Diamond, CFD Legislative Committee Chair